

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
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O 171001Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY RABAT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1624

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 RABAT 2084

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E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PFOR MO XA
SUBJECT: UNDER SECRETARY HABIB'S APRIL 15 AUDIENCE WITH KING
HASSAN: PART II - AFRICA

REQUEST DEPARTMENT REPEAT TO KINSHASA, PARIS, ALGIERS, TUNIS

REF: RABAT 2083

1. FOLLOWING DISCUSSION ON MIDDLE EAST (REFTEL), KING SAID HE WOULD LIKE TO GIVE UNDER SECRETARY HIS VIEWS ON CURRENT SITUATION IN AFRICA.
2. KING RECALLED THAT HE HAD BEEN DEEPLY IMPRESSED BY A VISIT HE HAD ONCE MADE TO LEININGRAD. THE HERMITAGE AND OTHER HISTORICAL SITES, ALL INHERITED FROM THE TSARS, HAD BEEN CAREFULLY PRESERVED BY THE SOVIETS, A CLEAR INDICATION THE COMMUNISTS IN POWER DIFFERED LITTLE FROM THEIR TSARIST PREDECESSORS WHEN IT CAME TO IMPERIALIST FOREIGN POLICY DESIGNS. PETER THE GREAT'S TESTAMENT HAD SPOKEN OF THE NEED TO REACH WARM WATERS, AND LENIN HAD PREDICTED THAT COMMUNIZATION OF EUROPE WOULD PROCEED THROUGH ITALY, THE WEAK POINT OF EUROPE. THESE PREDICTIONS HAD IN FACT BEEN LARGELY ACCOMPLISHED, IN KING'S VIEW. THE USSR WAS DEEPLY ENTRENCHED ON THE ASIAN SUB-CONTINENT AND THE SOVIET FLEET PLIED THE INDIAN OCEAN. IN ITALY, THE

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COMMUNISTS HAD NEVER BEEN STRONGER.

3. IN ADDITION, KING CONTINUED, SOVIETS WERE PENETRATING ETHIOPIA, AND HAD SOLID POSITIONS IN SOMALIA AND SOUTH YEMEN, WHICH COULD GIVE THEM CONTROL OF BAB EL MANDEB. MADAGASCAR AND ANGOLA WERE ALSO UNDER SOVIET INFLUENCE. THE SUDAN WAS A KEY BULWARK BECAUSE OF ITS PROXIMITY TO EGYPT AND SAUDI ARABIA,

AND MUST BE SUPPORTED.

4. THE SITUATION IN ZAIRE MUST BE SEEN IN THE PRECEDING CONTEXT, KING MAINTAINED. SOVIET STRATEGY, IN HIS ASSESSMENT, WAS DIRECTED IN NO SMALL MEASURE TOWARD CONTROL OF ENERGY LIFELINES. THE SOVIETS COULD NOT HOPE TO DESTROY THE U.S., WHICH HAD ENORMOUS RESOURCES AND ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY FOR FUTURE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT. WESTERN EUROPE WAS ANOTHER MATTER, HOWEVER, WITH MADAGASCAR AND ZAIRE STRATEGICALLY LOCATED ON ITS ENERGY SUPPLY ROUTES. KING THEN POINTED TO POWER VACUUM BETWEEN ZAIRE AND MOROCCO, DESPITE THE PRESENCE OF MODERATE LEADERS SUCH AS SENHOR, HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY, AND AHIDJO. THEY WERE RESPECTED AFRICAN, BUT HAD NO POWER AT THEIR DISPOSAL TO CURB SOVIET INFLUENCE IN THE AREA.

5. TURNING TO LIBYA, KING DESCRIBED IT AS A STRATEGIC ARSENAL FOR USE BY THE SOVIETS IN AFRICA. HE SAID THERE WERE 7,000 SOVIETS IN THE COUNTRY, ALONG WITH CZECHS AND OTHER EASTERN EUROPEANS, AS WELL AS 800 TANKS, OVER 300 IARCRAFT INCLUDING MIG-23S, AND VAST STORES OF OTHER MILITARY EQUIPMENT.

6. "I AM AN AFRICAN, AND THIS IS MY CONTINENT", KING ASSERTED. MOROCCO WOULD DO EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO PREVENT SOVIETS FROM ATTAINING THEIR OBJECTIVES.

7. MOROCCO WOULD, HOWEVER, NEED HELP, KING ADDED. HE DID NOT INTEND TO REQUEST U.S. ARMS, UNDERSTANDING THE U.S. POSITION IN THIS RESPECT. THIS BEING SAID, KING SAID THAT THE U.S. SHOULD HELP MOROCCO CONTRIBUTE TO DEFENDING THE INTERESTS OF THE
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WEST IN AFRICA BY ASKING THE U.K., BELGIUM AND THE NETHERLANDS TO OPEN THEIR ARSENALS TO MOROCCO, WHICH WITH SAUDI AND KUWAITI FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE COULD PAY FOR ITS MILITARY REQUIREMENTS. (THIS STATEMENT CLARIFIES KING'S SOMEWHAT VAGUE REMARKS TO AMBASSADOR ON APRIL 12, RABAT 2003.) ON OTHER HAND, MOROCCO COULD NOT MAINTAIN ITS DEFENSE EFFORT AND SIMULTANEOUSLY DEVOTE ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THEREFORE MOROCCO NEEDED U.S. ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, THROUGH EXPANDED AID PROGRAMS, PL-480, AND EXIM CREDITS.

8. KING WAS CONFIDENT THAT IN FIVE YEARS AFRICA COULD BECOME IMPREGNABLE TO SOVIET DOMINATION IF U.S. INCREASED ITS ASSISTANCE ON THE CONTINENT. THE KEY WAS TO STRENGTHEN NATIONALISM IN AFRICA. THIS COULD BEST BE ACCOMPLISHED WITH MORE ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE. EVEN SMALL, WEAK AFRICAN COUNTRIES COULD BE SIGNIFICANTLY REINFORCED, SUCH AS NIGER, WHICH FEARED NEIGHBORING ALGERIA.

9. HABIB TOOK THIS OCCASION TO DESCRIBE LATEST U.S. DECISION

TO PROVIDE \$13 MILLION OF NON-LETHAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ZAIRE (STATE 82515). KING WELCOMED THIS DECISION. PRIME MINISTER ALSO WELCOMED IT, BUT POINTED TO "WIDELY HELD IMPRESSION" THAT U.S. DID NOT CONSIDER ZAIRE A MAJOR PROBLEM. KING CITED AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S STATEMENT THAT THE CUBANS WERE A FORCE FOR STABILITY IN ANGOLA AS HAVING UNDERMINED U.S. IMAGE ON THIS ISSUE. FOREIGN MINISTER LARAKI ADDED THAT WASHINGTON'S REPEATED DENIALS OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S STATEMENTS DID NOT UNDO THE DAMAGE, AS IT WAS AN AXIOM THAT DENIALS NEVER CAUGHT UP WITH THE ORIGINAL STORIES.

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10. HABIB SAID THAT HE PERSONALLY DID NOT AGREE WITH AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S STATEMENT ON CUBANS IN ANGOLA. U.S., HE ADDED, RECOGNIZED ITS LIMITATIONS IN THE LIGHT OF THE AFTERMATH OF VIETNAM, WATERGATE AND CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES, IN THE CASE OF ZAIRE, HOWEVER, HABIB RECALLED THAT IN HIS RECENT DISCUSSIONS WITH SENATORS AND CONGRESSMEN, THEY HAD BEEN SKEPTICAL MAINLY BECAUSE THEY HAD SEEN NO EVIDENCE THAT ZAIRE WAS DOING ANY FIGHTING DESPITE NO APPARENT LACK OF ARMS, AMMUNITION, OR EQUIPMENT. KING AGREED THIS WAS A PROBLEM, AND HE HAD ALSO BECOME AWARE OF IT THROUGH THE MILITARY MISSION HE HAD SENT TO ZAIRE BEFORE DECIDING ON DISPATCHING THE MOROCCAN CONTINGENT. IN THIS CONNECTION, KING SAID HE HAD JUST RECEIVED MESSAGE FROM COL. LOUBARIS, MOROCCAN COMMANDER IN ZAIRE, THAT TWO ENEMY AMMUNITION TRAINS HAD BEEN DESTROYED NEAR MUTSHATSHA ON TRACK TOWARD KOLWEZI. LOUBARIS HIMSELF HAD HAD TO SERVE AS A SPOTTER IN THE AIR IN THIS OPERATION, AS ZAIRIANS HAD BEEN UNWILLING TO USE THEIR THREE MACCHIS EVEN THOUGH THEIR INTELLIGENCE ON THE TRAIN MOVEMENTS WAS ACCURATE.

11. HABIB SAID U.S. WOULD BE IN BETTER POSITION TO HELP ZAIRE

IF THERE WERE EVIDENCE OF ZAIRIAN RESISTANCE. PERHAPS MOROCCO
COULD PERSUADE ZAIRIAN ARMY TO DO MORE. ALSO, IF ZAIRIANS COULD
TAKE EVEN ONE PRISONER IN GOOD HEALTH WHO COULD GIVE EVIDENCE OF
ANY ANGOLAN, SOVIET OR CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN THEIR TRAINING,
ORGANIZATION OR SUPPLY, THE REACTION IN THE U.S. MIGHT WELL BE
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MORE FORTHCOMING. KING PICKED UP TELEPHONE AND ISSUED ORDERS TO
COL.MAJ. DLIMI, WHO CURRENTLY IN ZAIRE, TO ATTEMPT TO CAPTURE A
GROUP OF PRISONERS.

12. REGARDING MOROCCAN DECISION TO SEND CONTINGENT TO ZAIRE,
HABIB EXPRESSED HOPE THAT IT WOULD HELP STABILIZE THE MILITARY
SITUATION SO THAT THE DIPLOMATIC PROCESS, PARTICULARLY THE
NIGERIAN MEDIATION EFFORT, COULD MOVE FORWARD. HE STRESSED
IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING TO SEEK DIPLOMATIC PROGRESS. HASSAN DID
NOT PICK UP THE REFERENCE TO NIGERIAN MEDIATION, BUT NODDED
AFFIRMATIVELY ON THE NECESSITY FOR DIPLOMATIC PROGRESS.

13. AS A FINAL COMMENT, KING NOTED THAT ALGERIANS MUST BE
WONDERING ABOUT MOROCCAN DECISION CONCERNING ZAIRE. ON
REFLECTION, HE THOUGHT IT WAS A USEFUL MOVE EVEN IN CONTEXT
OF TENSIONS BETWEEN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO, AS ALGERIANS MUST
THINK THAT IF HE COULD SEND TROOPS TO ZAIRE, HE MUST HAVE
MILITARY SITUATION WELL IN HAND AT HOME.

14. HABIB HAS CLEARED THIS MESSAGE.
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